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MLPA Initiative  
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To whom it may concern:

I am currently a 4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate at UC Irvine enrolled in a Biodiversity and Conservation class where I am studying the Central Coast Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). If I must choose, I support the development of the MPAs in accordance with the "Proposed Regulation" that allows for what seems to be the best balance between economic impact and marine conservation. Reading the report, along with comments from stakeholders and concerned citizens, I see the most conflict arise in regards to kelp harvesting, recreational diving, and commercial and sport fishing.

Being a freshwater stream fisherman, I have found the catch and release streams of the Sierra Nevada areas to be very successful by having high recreational value with minimal impact to the ecosystem. Implementing such a system or imposing very strict limits for sport fishing competitions and regular recreation fishing would be wise to consider. In regard to the conflict between Monterey Breakwater fisherman and divers, perhaps implementing proportionate fishing only and diving only areas would alleviate some of the hazards.

The impact on commercial fishermen seems to be great, as they will be forced to fish in less profitable areas. Perhaps it would be wise to analyze the growth of fish populations in MPAs and see how this growth might lead to areas outside the MPAs having a long term increase in fishable populations, and hence longer term profits for fishermen.

The amount of kelp harvested during a time period needs to be based on the current state of the kelp bed determined by a reputable source. I believe taking such a stance would be beneficial to both the harvester, by allowing them to harvest in times of surplus, and to conservationists, by protecting it during times of deficit. Simply saying X amount of kelp harvesters can take Y tons of kelp is insufficient.

In the end, MPAs are a positive step toward insuring a biologically diverse marine ecosystem. The regulations of the MPAs need to evolve and adapt to the changing ecosystem to suite our own human needs, both recreational and economic, as well as the conservation of our environment.

Sincerely,

Michael Golightly

